

PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION REPORT



**VINH-MU GIA PASS  
LOGISTICS NETWORK  
NORTH VIETNAM**

NPIC/R-10/69  
FEBRUARY 1969

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION REPORT

VINH-MU GIA PASS  
LOGISTICS NETWORK  
NORTH VIETNAM

FEBRUARY 1969

NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION CENTER

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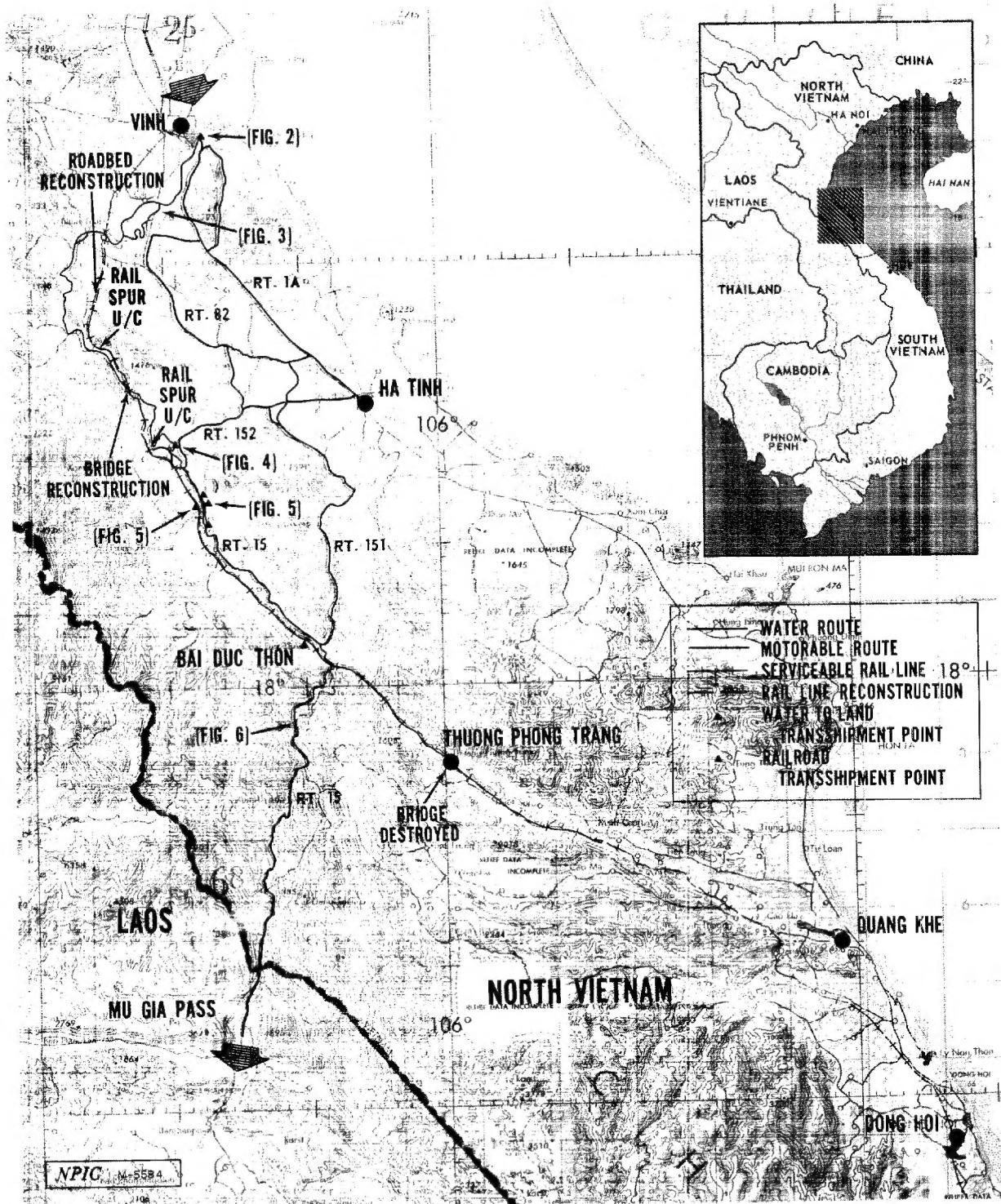


FIGURE 1. GENERAL LOCATION MAP.

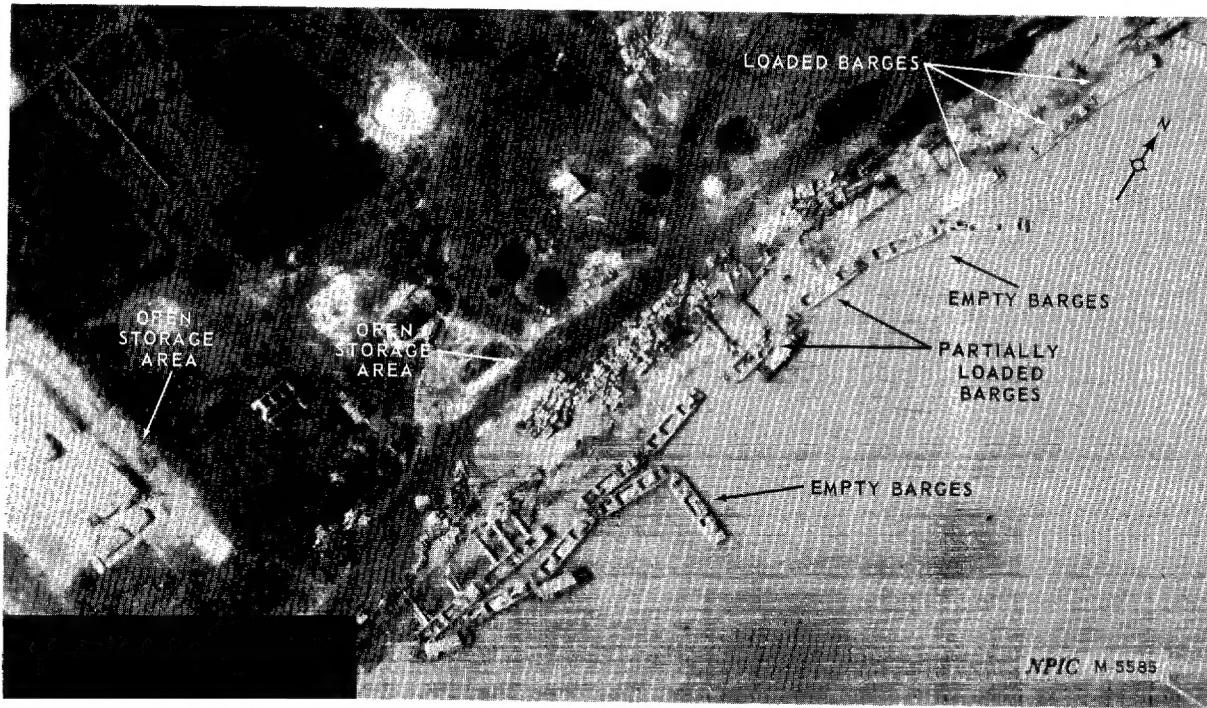
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## ABSTRACT

Analysis of recent aerial photography has revealed the North Vietnamese are moving an unprecedented amount of supplies over a well-developed and coordinated logistics network from Vinh through Bai Duc Thon to the Mu Gia Pass. This network utilizes one major rail and water route and several roads. Transshipping points have been constructed at critical locations to permit transloading from one transportation mode to another. Utilization of this network allows maximum use of vehicles, vessels, and rolling stock and ensures a rapid and smooth flow of supplies. The present lack of overflowing stockpiles in the Vinh area reflects the capability of this logistics network to clear and move the very large quantities of supplies being transported into Vinh from the north.

## WATERWAY

The most significant component in the logistics network (Figure 1) is a 50-nautical-mile (nm) waterway, which is navigable to large barges. This waterway, connecting the Vinh and Ha Dong Areas, utilizes portions of the Song Ca, Song La Giang, and Ngan Sau rivers. The largest transshipment point in the Vinh area has been established recently at Yen Dung (Figure 2). Four primary transshipment



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FIGURE 2. YEN DUNG TRANSSHIPMENT POINT, VINH AREA, NORTH VIETNAM.

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points are being utilized in the vicinity of Ha Dong, where the southernmost navigable portion of the waterway parallels Route 15 and a reactivated segment of the Vinh-Dong Hoi rail line.

Although there is extensive use of sampans on the waterway, the greatest bulk of materiel is being transported by dumb (non-motorized) barges. Normally, six to eight of these barges, each with at least a 100 ton capacity, are towed in tandem by a motorized barge or smaller river craft (Figure 3). A single reconnaissance mission revealed 70 of these barges and approximately 300 sampans on the lower 70 percent of the waterway. (This does not include the transshipment points near Vinh where a large number of barges and craft have been repeatedly observed.)

The primary cargo is crated goods with some bagged goods and POL drums. Numerous large stacks of these materials, in both open and covered storage, are located adjacent to the primary off-loading points. These transshipment points at the southern terminus of the waterway are characterized by a general lack of storage sheds and off-loading facilities (Figures 4 and 5).

#### RAIL LINE

25X1D As of late [REDACTED] approximately 14.5 nm of the Vinh-Dong Hoi rail line was being utilized as the central component in the logistics network. This rail segment, extending between transshipment points in the Ha Dong (Figure 5) and Bai Duc Thon areas, is only serviceable to lorries and two-axle rail cars. It serves chiefly to augment the vehicular routes by shuttling material to the major infiltration staging areas near Bai Duc Thon. There are at least eight lorries and 45 cars currently involved in this operation.

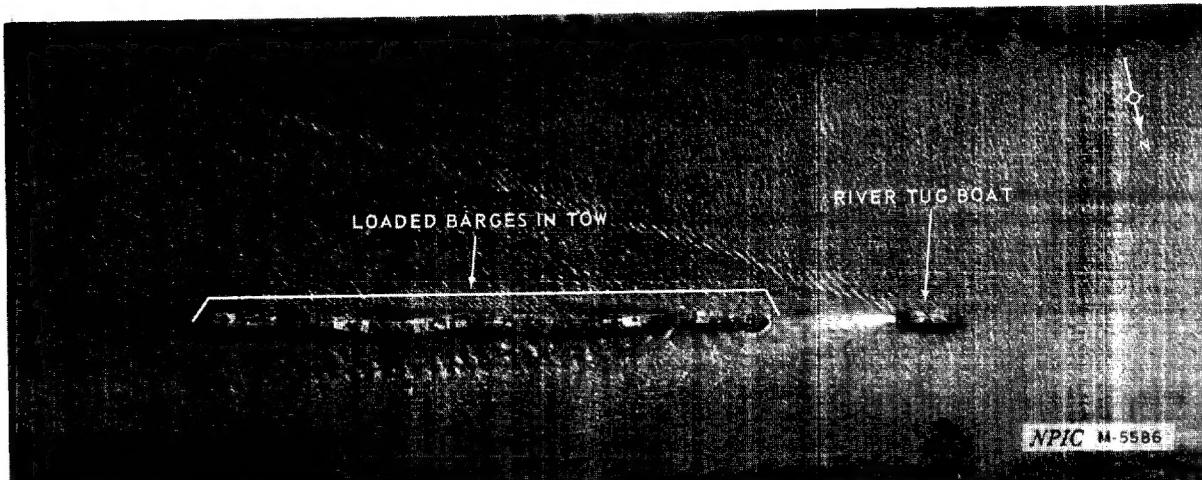
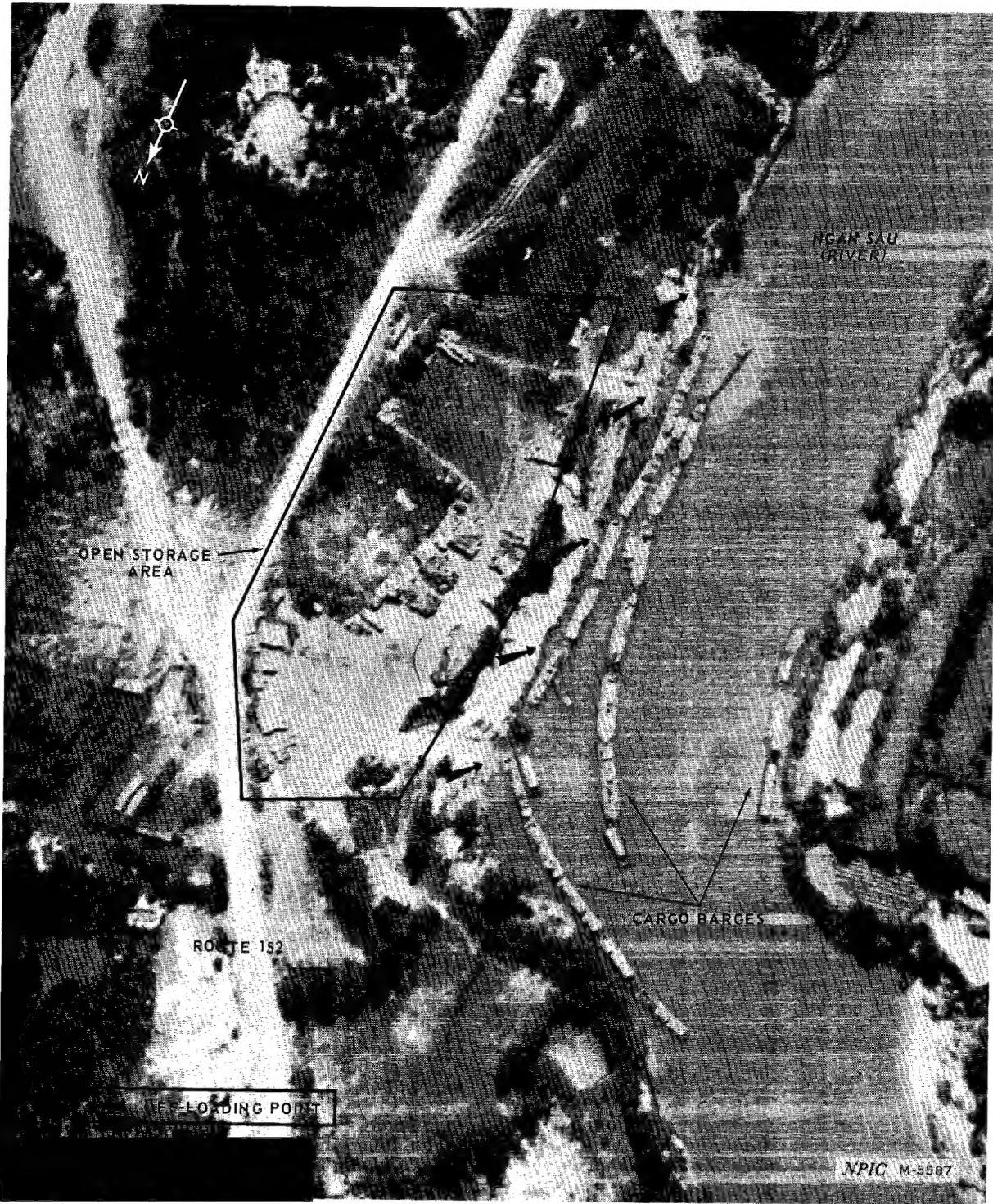


FIGURE 3. SOUTHBOUND CARGO BARGES, NORTH VIETNAM.



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FIGURE 4. TRANSSHIPMENT POINT, HA DONG AREA, NORTH VIETNAM.

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FIGURE 5. RAILROAD AND WATER TRANSSHIPMENT POINTS, HA DONG AREA, NORTH VIETNAM.

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It appears that the operational portion of this line will be extended northward. There are approximately 5 nm of serviceable track north of Ha Dong and reconstruction of the line is underway for at least 10 additional miles. Included within this expansion are two short rail spurs which will probably serve additional water-to-rail transshipment points.

South of Bai Duc Thon, the rail line is serviceable to the major river crossing at Thuong Phong Trang. An additional 14 nm of serviceable track extends southeast from the river crossing towards Quang Khe and Dong Hoi. Although unrelated to the Vinh-Mu Gia Pass logistics routes, recent activity along these segments probably indicates a further expansion of the rail line's functions.

### **MOTORABLE ROUTES**

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There has been a significant increase in the daytime traffic on the primary roads between Vinh and Mu Gia Pass since [REDACTED]. This is particularly true of the Route 15 segment south of Bai Duc Thon, where the various components of the logistics network converge for the final leg into Laos (Figure 6).

The major routes being utilized between Vinh and Bai Duc Thon are 1A, 82, 151, 15, and 152. These roads have remained essentially unaltered during the past two months, with vehicles merely circumventing bomb craters. Numerous temporary pontoon by-pass bridges, particularly north of Ha Tinh, and unimproved fords continue to be used in spite of the greatly increased volume of traffic and the elimination of the bombing threat. The only substantial impediment to vehicular movement is the Song Ca (river), south of Vinh, where a ferry is in operation at Ben Thuy.

Although some vehicles may transit the entire network directly from Vinh to Mu Gia Pass, the large number of truck parks in the Bai Duc Thon area indicates that the bulk of the materiel is probably transloaded, stored, or held for shuttling into Laos. This may also be true for the vehicles which complement the operational rail segment between Ha Dong and Bai Duc Thon. Additional congestion in this area is no doubt attributable to the limitations imposed on daytime vehicular movement in Laos.

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FIGURE 6. SOUTHBOUND TRUCK CONVOY, ROUTE 15, NORTH VIETNAM.

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REFERENCES

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MAPS OR CHARTS

ACIC. USAF Pilotage Chart, PC J-11DG, 2d ed, Aug 67, scale 1:500,000 (UNCLASSIFIED)

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